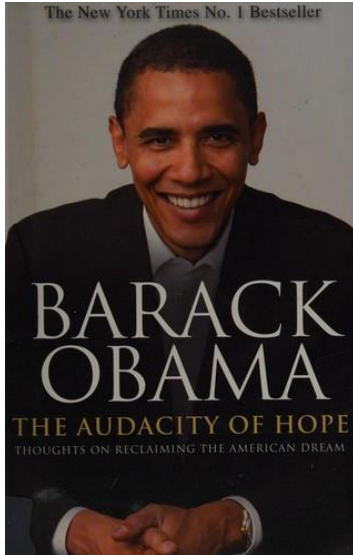


## BOOK GROUP 2 FEBRUARY 2023

### THE AUDACITY OF HOPE BY BARACK OBAMA



Barack Obama was sworn into the US Senate in January 2005 and this book was published in 2006 and therefore does not refer to his presidency. From an English person's perspective it is a fascinating way to compare similarities and differences between two political systems. It is difficult to separate the book from the knowledge we now have of his lofty political achievements but it does give us a sense of the man and his values.

Obama describes his hopes for a more caring politics, being mindful of the need for empathy and compromise. He sets out a case for concentrating on less power and more community concerns, overlooking differences in faith and race and concentrating on the similarities in order to help the disadvantaged, and diplomacy rather than boots on the ground in foreign policy - all things that the vast majority of us would heartily agree with. He is generous in his references to his Democrat and Republican colleagues and the achievements of former Presidents of both parties.

He comes across as a good listener, one who does not interrupt or impose his views on people but who hears what they say. Conversations on the campaign trail confirmed his decision to continue to try to bring about change for the benefit of all. The book also shows us the importance of family to him and he is clearly a "hands-on" father who enjoys sharing parenthood responsibilities with his wife Michelle.

It is gratifying to realise that as President he remained true to his principles and has never been embroiled in scandal of any kind. Always an eloquent speaker, his writing style is very clear and engaging making for a worthwhile read. His ideas are commendable but difficult to implement as he found out when he became President and he himself admits that it would seem an impossible task. Good on him for trying!

Christine Wright

